DOCUMENTS

STATEMENT

of

the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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More than 12 years have already passed since the liberation of Korea from the yoke of the colonial rule of the Japanese imperialists. And it is already more than 4 years since the signing of the Armistice Agreement which put an end to the disastrous three-year war imposed upon the Korean people by the U.S. imperialist aggressors and the Syngman Rheeites.

However, Korea has not yet been unified and the Korean people are still undergoing misfortunes because of the division of the country.

The entire Korean people ardently desire to tear down the artificial barrier between the North and South at the earliest date and unify the fatherland peacefully.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, proceeding from the unanimous desire of the entire Korean people, has already advanced more than once a number of reasonable proposals for the promotion of the peaceful unification of the country and has been striving for their realization.

However, the United States and the South Korean authorities, unconditionally turning down the fair proposals of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, are opposing the peaceful unification of Korea and advocating "unification by force." The South Korean authorities ruthlessly suppress and persecute the people, political parties and politicians on the charge of the "violation of the state policy," when they show even the slightest indication of being in favour of peaceful unification.

The U.S. side and the South Korean authorities are increasing tension in Korea by systematically wrecking the Armistice Agreement. They have arbitrarily refused to observe the most important provision of the Armistice Agreement which prohibits armaments reinforcement in Korea, and are engrossed in introducing new types of weapons into South Korea and building up an atomic base there.

Today, in South Korea under the occupation of the U.S. imperialists, the slightest democratic freedom and rights are denied to the people; the economy is subordinated to the United States; the national industry and medium and small enterprises are going bankrupt day by day. The rural economy has also been devastated, with the result that the peasant households which run out of provisions and leave their farm land are increasing year after year. South Korea, once a food-exporting area, has been reduced to a famine-stricken area, which imports millions of suk of grain every year from abroad.

As a result, in South Korea millions of unemployed are now wandering about the streets and the living conditions of the popular masses are all the more miserable.

The longer the unification of Korea is delayed, the greater will be the sufferings of the South Korean people and the national misfortunes of the entire Korean people.

Owing to the division of the country for more than 12 years, the comprehensive development of the national economy and national culture of our country is being completely hampered. Even the integrated development of the national language which has been used regularly for generations is being menaced.

It is impossible for the relatives and friends

separated in the North and South even to hear from each other, much less see each other. This extremely unreasonable state must not continue any longer.

The main cause of the delay of the peaceful unification of the country, of the increasing danger to peace in Korea and of the aggravation of the wretched situation in South Korea lies in the continued occupation of South Korea by the U.S. Army.

Recently, in particular, the U.S. Army and the South Korean army staged a large-scale atomic war manoeuvre near the military demarcation line.

The U.S. Army commanders as well as Syngman Rhee and other South Korean bellicose elements take no pains to conceal the fact that they are making preparations for a new war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and are openly blaring that they have introduced atomic weapons into South Korea. Thus peace in Korea is facing a grave danger.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea deems it its sacred duty to take once again, at this critical juncture, appropriate measures for removing the threat to peace, easing the tense situation and promoting the peaceful unification of the country.

The Korean question can never be solved by means of armed invasion the U.S. imperialists and Syngman Rheeites are plotting. It must be and can be solved only by peaceful means, that is, by means of negotiations and talks.

Considering that the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea and the peaceful unification of Korea are matured issues the solution of which admits of no delay, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea declares that the following measures should be immediately taken:

1. For easing the tense situation in Korea and solving the Korean question peacefully the U.S. Army and all other foreign troops including the Chinese People's Volunteers should be simultaneously withdrawn from North and South Korea. For this purpose all the countries which have dispatched their troops to Korea should take at an early date appropriate steps for immediately withdrawing their troops from Korea.

The occupation of South Korea by the U.S. Army cannot be justified under any pretext, and the U.S. Army has no ground whatsoever for remaining in South Korea.

2. Within a definite period after the complete withdrawal of all the foreign troops from North and South Korea, all-Korea free elections should be held. These elections may be conducted under the observation of a neutral nations organization. The democratic rights of the people and the expression of their free will should be ensured in the elections.

For this, the free activities of all the political parties and social organizations as well as of political and social figures in North and South Korea and the freedom of speech, the press, assembly and association should be legally granted everywhere in North and South Korea.

Such suppression of the activities of political parties and the freedom of speech as being practised in South Korea at present should be strictly prohibited.

3. For the discussion of questions pertaining to economic and cultural exchange between the North and South and to the all-Korea elections, negotiations between the North and South based on equality should be realized at an early date.

Free postal communication and free travel of peaceful inhabitants between the North and South should be permitted.

The North and South may respectively designate definite spots, to begin with, and conduct economic intercourse between the North and South at these spots.

For the comprehensive development of national culture including the national language, mutual contacts and joint activities of scholars, men of culture and arts and sportsmen of North and South Korea should be undertaken.

4. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has already reduced the numerical strength of its army by 80,000. The armies of North and South Korea should be respectively reduced to the minimum in the near future. By responding without delay to this fair proposal of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the reduction of armaments of the North and South, the South Korean authorities should ease the tension between the North and South and lighten the onerous

burden of military expenses which the South Korean people pay for the maintenance of the expanded "ROK Army."

Under the present situation in which the destiny of the fatherland and the people is gravely menaced, all the Korean people with national conscience, regardless of their political views and social status, must be firmly united under the banner of the peaceful unification of the country and win the unification and independence of the fatherland and safeguard national honour by courageously struggling for the implementation of the programme of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the unification of the country.

This is the supreme national task set before each Korean today.

Firmly convinced that the realization of the above measures will greatly conduce to the peaceful unification of Korea and to the preservation of peace in the Far East, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expects that the governments and the people of all countries concerned about the maintenance of peace in Korea and the peaceful solution of the Korean question will pay due attention to this statement.

February 5, 1958
Pyongyang